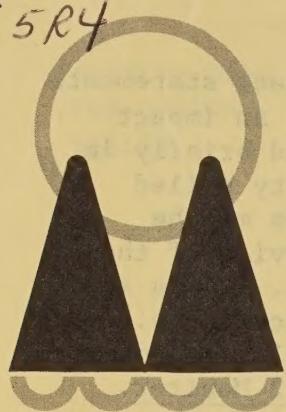


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RESPONSE

A Report on Actions for A Better Environment

NO. 1

AUGUST 1971

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RESPONSE is a periodic report from the United States Department of Agriculture on USDA's many areas of action to remedy environmental problems. Department programs protect and improve the environment through research, forestry, conservation and wide range of rural and community services.

**REPORT ON
ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY**

The Second Annual Report of the Council on Environmental Quality was released by the White House this month. It summarizes the status of major environmental concerns, and is of general interest to environmentalists of every stripe from private citizens to professional ecologists. Here are just two excerpts of special interest to agriculture.

PESTICIDES -- Use of persistent pesticides has been declining and should eventually alleviate some of the adverse environmental effects from their use. Yet they are being replaced by more toxic materials which will probably result in a higher incidence of accidental poisonings.

LAND USE -- Wetlands and open space are under particular pressure from development. In the Atlantic Coast States, new housing construction is the single greatest cause of coastal wetland losses. From 1954 to 1964, New York and Connecticut lost more than 29 percent and 12 percent, respectively, of their coastal wetlands.

**AGRICULTURE
IN THE
ENVIRONMENT**

A series of articles appearing in the USDA periodical THE FARM INDEX have been reprinted by popular demand. Subjects treated in the reprint are: The Agricultural Perspective (introduction); Using the Land; Who Pays for What?; and The Legislative Record. Single copies are available upon request to the Editor of RESPONSE.

**ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION
PROJECT**

Seven Minnesota high school teachers and several environmental consultants from State and private organizations teamed up with Forest Service scientists to devise environmental coursework for Minnesota high school students. The resulting instruction guides will be put to use in the classes this fall.

NEW SOURCE
FOR IMPACT
STATEMENTS

As reported in the June RESPONSE, Environmental impact statements review individual federal proposals that would have an impact on the environment. These statements are summarized briefly in a publication of the Council on Environmental Quality called the 102 Monitor. Now the complete impact statements may be ordered from the National Technical Information Service of the Department of Commerce, Springfield, Virginia 22151. Costs are \$3 for a paper copy of one statement; \$.95 for a microfiche. If a statement exceeds 300 pages copies cost \$6. All statements should be ordered by the number indicated in the 102 Monitor.

ARTICLES
WORTH
CHECKING

USDA periodicals are carrying articles of interest to many environmentalists. The current issue of AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE REVIEW (of CSRS) presents the argument: "Environmental Benefits of Intensive Crop Production". Also, recent issues of SOIL CONSERVATION magazine (of SCS) give major environmental themes complete-issue treatments. The March issue was on managing wetlands; the May issue was on man-made lakes; and the June issue was given over to pollution and its control. Individual copies of the above are available upon request to the Editor of RESPONSE.

ISLANDS
OF HOPE

The National Recreation and Park Association has issued a major document on environmental management and interpretation. Titled Islands of Hope: Parks and Recreation in Environmental Crisis, it is billed as an essay to spur discussion within park and recreation groups and related professions. It presents the most recent thinking of environmentalists of NRPA and the National Park Service and challenges some long established viewpoints and practices in use by park and recreation managers. Copies may be ordered by mail for \$4.45 including postage from: Publications Center, National Recreation and Park Association, 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20006.

BIO-WAR
WAGED ON
BEETLE

Since 1962 when it was first discovered in the United States the cereal leaf beetle has proven to be a particularly destructive pest with few natural enemies. A world-wide search by USDA scientists in 1965 turned up some natural enemies that ultimately cleared U.S. quarantine and extensive studies to determine if each species could adapt and would attack only target pests. This year three species of tiny wasp parasites were released at 120 locations in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The wasps attack the beetle eggs and larvae. ARS

REMOVING
UNDESOLVED
PARTICLES
FROM WATER

Undissolved solid particles are the main pollutants in many effluents. A low-cost experimental filtering system (called the uni-flow filter) now being developed at the ARS Western Regional Research laboratory in Berkeley, California, may prove useful in a number of water cleaning systems including sewage plants. Experiments in the laboratory indicate that if lime is first added to sewage, the filter will remove more than 99 percent of the solids, and at least 92 percent without lime added.

REVISED PLAN
FOR OREGON
VALLEY

In 1969, Secretary Hardin suspended timber sales in the French Pete Creek Valley in the Willamette National Forest of Western Oregon. The purpose -- to allow time to develop a better management plan for the 19,000-acre valley. Since then over 10,000 letters, cards and telegrams from environmental groups and other concerned citizens have poured into the Forest Service, all urging special measures to protect the unique wilderness features of the valley. In response to the suggestions the Secretary endorsed six modifications of the original plan which add greatly to the preservation of the valley environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL
DIRECTORY
PLANNED

An Environmental Directory for Agricultural Science is being planned as a cooperative venture by scientific agricultural societies. It will be primarily to help news people locate the best sources of background information when they prepare stories on environmental issues related to agriculture. RESPONSE will report the availability of the publication when it is published.

GYPSY MOTHS
SPREAD SOUTH

Recent identifications of gypsy moths in Maryland and Delaware indicate they are spreading down the east coast. Resident of those states may be seeing the destructive moths in their forests next year. Single gypsy moth caterpillars eat 70 square feet of leaf and their egg clusters hold up to 1,000 eggs. They can kill evergreens with one defoliation and susceptible hardwoods such as oak, birch, and apple with two defoliation.

BEEKEEPERS
ALERTED

Concerned about the possible introduction of Acarine disease and the aggressive African bee (reported in the June RESPONSE) USDA officials asked amateur and professional beekeepers to guard against the illegal importation of queen bees. A 1962 law bans introduction of adult bees into the United States from all foreign countries, except Canada. Acarine disease is caused by a mite that infests the respiratory organs of bees. The African bee is particularly aggressive with vicious swarming and stinging habits. ARS

INVESTIGATING
WILDFIRES

In an effort to combat man-caused wildfires which burned over 1,700,000 acres of forest land in 1970 alone, Forest Service has initiated a new slide/tape training program. The course on wildfire investigation will teach personnel ways of identifying the origin of a fire.

HOW GOOD
ARE TREE
WILDBREAKS?

A timely study was just released on the effects of tree wind-breaks and slat barriers on wind velocity, snow trapping to increase soil water for adjacent crops, and crop yield. Based on a 10-year study of windbreaks in the northern Great Plains, the report (PRR 121) presents information on what constitutes an effective windbreak as well as problems caused by improperly planned or poorly maintained windbreaks. Single copies are available upon request to the editor of RESPONSE. This study will probably determine the spacing and layout of windbreaks of the future.

ALGAE VS MOSQUITOES Algae that prevents young mosquitoes (larvae) from hatching was recently furnished to the San Joaquin Valley mosquito abatement district, California. The recently discovered species releases toxins injurious to the Larva's internal organs. Details available from: The Director, Agricultural Experiment Station, Berkeley, California 92502. CSRS

CUTTING VEG-PROCES-SING POLLUTANTS Nutrients leached from vegetables during processing (blanching with steam or hot water) become serious pollutants. Now USDA cooperating with the University of Wisconsin is testing a new method called individual quick blanching (IQB) in which up to 90 percent of these nutrients can be retained in the food. First conceived at the ARS Western regional research lab in Berkeley, California, a pilot-plant unit, with a 300 pounds per hour capacity, is being operated at the University of Wisconsin during this canning season. Tests will include try-outs in commercial canning facilities.

SYMPORIUM ON ANIMAL WASTES Two hundred of the nation's foremost authorities on problems of what to do with animal wastes will meet by invitation at Airlie House in Warrenton, Virginia for a 3-day symposium (September 28-30). They will discuss and develop proposals concerning research needs, legislation, regulation enforcement, technical and financial assistance and ways to accomplish environmental objectives without placing undue hardships on producers. Findings and recommendations will be collected in the published proceedings.

TRAINING IN PESTICIDE TECHNOLOGY The Environmental Protection Agency is sponsoring courses (3 to 4 days long) in Atlanta, Georgia, on pesticides and public health. Course content is designed for employees of local, or State health departments, arthropod control districts, pest control operators, spray pilots, conservation groups, biologists, ecologists, sanitarians, and others whose employment includes the responsibility for performing or supervising pest control activities. Although courses are scheduled for early 1972 prospective applicants are advised to act early since attendance will be limited. Inquire by writing to Environmental Protection Agency, Pesticides Programs, Division of Pesticide Community Studies, 4770 Buford Highway, Chamblee, Georgia 30341 (ATTN: Training, State Services).

RECREATION FACILITY DESIGN New designs for recreation facilities (now totaling 68) have been issued to Soil Conservation Service field offices. All emphasize environmental considerations and are being furnished to soil and water conservation district cooperators, consultants, and others requesting them. For further information contact Kenneth E. Grant, Administrator, Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.